AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 16, line 17, and ending on page 17, line 11 as follows:

Referring now to ~~FIGURE 2~~ FIGURE 3, upon starting the SML-4 software on each server in the exemplary SML-4 system 10, at step 200, the configuration file is read and validated for accuracy. In addition, at step 205, each sever is set to passive mode at start up by installing a firewall rule to block inbound ICMP for the L4 address and a firewall rule to block inbound TCP packets with the SYN flag set for the L4 address. Each server starts up in passive mode for a limited amount of time while the server determines how many other servers are operating in the cluster, what their addresses are, which server is in active mode, and which servers are operating the SML-4 software. Thereafter, at step 210, firewall rules are installed in each server to block outbound TCP packets coming from the L4 address (virtual address) with the RST flag set. At step 215, the L4 address is configured as an alias on the loopback interface of the system. In other words, software is instructing the server to accept TCP packets on the virtual IP address. At step 220, a static and published ARP entry is added to the kernel's ARP table for the L4 address using the configured MAC address. This step essentially tells the server to provide the virtual MAC address in response to ARP requests for the virtual IP address.